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KURAI WONDERLAND

presents

饗愛カタストロフィ

Kyou Ai katasutorofi

黛 ハル太 Haruta Mayuzumi

CHAPTER 5

STARE-
humming
humming
KABOOM
WAAHHH!
WAH--!? EH!? THE WALL...!
HUH!?

TA-DA
Nike's hidden camera resurrection was-
A huge success.
THE HIDDEN CAMERA WAS A HUGE SUCCESS!!
NORMALLY YOU'D JUST NOTIFY THE PERSON! NORMALLY!!
HA HA HA
YOU DIDN'T LIKE OUR MAIDENS' SURPRISE?
AND YET IT TOOK US FOUR HOURS TO MAKE THIS WALL...
NIKE'S RESURRECTION
THEN YOU SHOULD'VE NOTIFIED ME FOUR HOURS AGO...
TERRIS
...WAS WORRIED...
...ABOUT NIKE?
RIGHT NIKE?
YOU'RE BEING PRETTY COLD FOR SOMEONE WHO WAS SO WORRIED ABOUT NIKE'S CONDITION
HA HA
IT WASN'T REALLY ABOUT NIKE'S CONDITION, THOUGH...
.....
VERY
MUCH

AH, ETO
OH, THERE YOU ARE.
I HAVE A MISSION FOR THE TWO OF YOU.
WE PICKED UP ON SOME SPROUTING IN THE METROPOLITAN AREA
I'M GIVING YOU THE DATA ON THE INFECTED PEOPLE TOO, SO THAT YOU CAN LEAVE RIGHT AWAY.

BUNNY
EVEN IF IT'S CUTE, YOU CAN'T DO THAT
.....
HEY, DON'T DO THAT!
CUTE
BUNNY
BEEP BEEP
AND THE PROCEDURES FOR INFILTRATION?
THOSE ARE ALSO BEING COMPLETED
WELL THEN, WE'RE OFF-
AH. HOLD ON, HOLD ON.
THIS TIME, SOMEONE ELSE IS GOING ON THE MISSION WITH YOU.
HUH?

LET'S SEE...
THE INFECTED PEOPLE THIS TIME ARE...
THAT SWEETS SHOP MANAGER,
YUASA JUNPEI,
AND
HIGH-SCHOOL STUDENT AND PART-TIME WORKER, KOUSAKA YUUNA.

Grab
EEEK!
STARE
.....
IT'S BEEN A DAY AND A HALF SINCE THEY SPROUTED
IT'LL STILL BE AWHILE UNTIL THEY BLOOM.
Damn it~~~
Why did I have to team up with Hiera?
The guy completely hates me and he's scary.
Scary. Incredibly scary.
STEALTHILY
How Terns sees him.
HUH!?
WHAT'S WITH THOSE EYES? YOU WANT ME TO REPLACE THEM WITH TWO LEAD BULLETS?
MY EYES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THIS WAY.
I'M SORRY.

Unngh...
IT'S INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE HIGHER-UPS SINCE THEY WERE CONCERNED OVER YOUR LAST FAILURE.
NIKE'S
RESURRECTION
HM?
WHAT'S THAT BIKE--?
WERE YOU RIDING SARCASTICALLY?
I FOUND A TEMPORARY PARTNER FOR HIERA SAN--
THERE'S A ROOK, ISN'T IT?
TCH
I GUESS IT CAN'T BE HELPED FOU'S UNDER MAINTENANCE SO HE COULDN'T LEAVE JAPAN
BESIDES...
YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO THROUGH ALL THAT TO GET ADEQUATE SURVEILLANCE
HMM. BUT YOU KNOW...
STARTING TODAY, I'M A PART-TIMER IN THAT STORE.
WHAT'S WITH THAT GETUP?
HUH? IT'S FOR SNEAKING IN

IF I DON'T WATCH FROM CLOSE BY, I WON'T BE ABLE TO EXPERIENCE IT FOR MYSELF, WILL I?
I'LL BE IN CHARGE OF THE GIRL SO I'M LEAVING THE OSSAN* TO YOU.
flip flip
ONLY HIS HAND IS VISIBLE SINCE HE'S SCARED.
OI! HANG ON!
WELL, THEN! TAKE CARE OF NIKE-CHAN!
HUH?
T/N: OSSAN = MIDDLE-AGED MAN
WHAT IS IT?
STARE
HIERA
...IS NOT A BUNNY
...AND THEREFORE...
...IS NOT CUTE.

OUT OF 31 PEOPLE
28
A GUY FROM CLASS WAS ALL "HUH!? YOU MEAN ARATA AND KOUSAKA WEREN'T ALREADY GOING OUT!?"
WHAT'S THAT?
THAT WAS THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO REPLIED THAT WAY

HUH?!
YOU ASKED THE ENTIRE CLASS ABOUT IT!?
I GOT SOME VIDEO COMMENTS, TOO DO YOU WANT TO SEE THEM?
NO, I DON'T!
WE WENT ON A DATE THAT ONE TIME.
BECAUSE OF THAT, WE WERE ABLE TO BECOME FRIENDS AND WORK AT THE SAME PART-TIME JOB
BUT EVEN SO-
YEAH, ANYONE WITH EYES IN THEIR HEAD WOULD'VE THOUGHT WE'D BEEN GOING OUT ALL ALONG...
WHY DID YOU FALL FOR THE SHOP MANAGER SO SUDDENLY?!
STOOP!
HE'LL HEAR YOU!
HUFF HUFF

.....
WHAT'S SO GOOD ABOUT THAT OSSAN ANYWAY?
HE'S NOT AN OSSAN!
...I DON'T KNOW...
BUT MY HEART STARTS BEATING FAST...
DOES IT SEEM LIKE THE GUY HAS FEELINGS FOR YOU, TOO?
IT'S NOT LIKE THAT.
THE SHOP MANAGER IS AN ADULT WHO'S ALWAYS KIND TO EVERYONE
MOREOVER, HE STILL SEES ME AS A CHILD
KNOCK KNOCK

NOT AT ALL. I WAS JUST READING THE EMPLOYEE GUIDELINES ALOUD.
HER-CHAH
YOU GUYS ARE RELAXING SORRY
STARTING TODAY WE HAVE A NEW KID JOINING US, SO PLEASE TAKE CARE OF HIM, OKAY?
NICE TO MEET YOU
WE ONLY JUST JOINED RECENTLY, TOO
AH, IS THAT SO?
I'M YAMADA I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU.

KURONA?
AH! I'M ONOCHUUNO ARATA
DO YOU REMEMBER ME?
IDIOT.
HE JUST SAID HIS NAME WAS YAMADA, DIDN'T HE?

Ah ha ha!
MY SURNAME IS VERY MUCH YAMADA~
Ah ha ha!
I SEE~ I MUST LOOK SIMILAR TO SOMEONE YOU KNOW, HUH~?
WELL THEN.
IT'S ALMOST TIME FOR THE THREE OF YOU TO COME TO THE STORE
RIGHT!
AH EXCUSE ME I'M GOING TO USE THE BATHROOM
I'M SORRY
I WAS SO CERTAIN THOSE WERE KURONA'S EYES BUT I'M WRONG...?
NO, NOT AT ALL~
SHEESH~
HUH ...?
AH, SO YOU JUST HAPPEN TO RESEMBLE HIM...
Shut
ARATA-KUN WHY DON'T YOU TEACH YAMADA-KUN ABOUT THE MERCHANDISE DISPLAY?
...
ARATA! SAY SOMETHING!

Disappear.
Disappear.
Disappear.
Disappear.
BAM
BA-DUMP

huff
huff
huff
huff
IT'S OKAY
ZOOM
ZOOM

!?
YUASA?
ISN'T IT TOO EARLY FOR IT TO APPEAR?
IS THAT A SYMPTOM OF BLOOMING UP
BUT...
THAT TYPE OF PAIN IS DEFINITELY...
CHATTER
CHATTER
WHERE'S THE CHOCO-LATE FLA-VOOP
MAMI, BUY THIS~

OH!
GOT IT
I'VE HAD THAT BEFORE, TOO. AND IT WAS DELICIOUS!
SINCE THESE SHELVES HOLD THE MOST POPULAR ITEMS, WE NEED TO TAKE CARE SO THAT THEY DON'T GET EMPTY
KOUSAKA-CHAN IS GOOD AT THIS WORK, ISN'T SHE?
SHE'S BEING ENTHUSIASTIC TO SHOW THE MANAGER HER STRONG POINTS
WE HAVE CHOCO-LATE!
I DON'T LIKE CHEESE FLAVOR, BUT DO YOU HAVE ANOTHER KIND BESIDES THIS?
I'LL PUT IT IN YOUR BASKET
THIS ONE'S OUR CHOCOLATE FLAVOR!
AH I'LL GET IT FOR YOU
THANK YOU

NO WAY~
EVEN THOUGH SHE SAID SHE GAVE ME CHOCOLATE, THIS IS CHEESE FLAVORED, ISN'T IT?
HM?
BECAUSE IT'S HER PERSONALITY, SHE'LL DO EVERYTHING WITH ALL HER MIGHT FOR THAT GUY.
I'LL EXCHANGE IT RIGHT AWAY.
FORGET IT! FORGET IT! IT'S TOO TROUBLESOME! I DON'T WANT IT ANYMORE
KOUSAKA-SAN.
Jolt
CHILDREN WILL MAKE MISTAKES AT WORK.
IT'S FINE
UM- I'M SORRY.

MANAGER!
PLEASE GAZE UPON THE CRYING FACE OF THIS UGLY WOMAN.
Sniff oo...
THIS IS BAD. IF I CRY, I LOOK LIKE A CHILD.
WAH!
C-CRYING?
THAT'S RIGHT. IF HE WERE TO SEE YOUR TEARY FACE, HE'D HIGHTAIL IT AWAY FROM YOU IN AN INSTANT~
MESSY WET
HYA HYA!
THANKS

FOR WHAT?
I JUST FEEL SORRY FOR MANAGER...
BECAUSE I KNOW EVERYTHING THERE IS TO KNOW ABOUT KOUSAKA
!?
WAIT- ARATA!?
WHAT ARE YOU PLANNING?!
YES.
IT SEEMS SO, DOESN'T IT?

WELCOME
NEXT TIME HANDLE THE PROBLEM CALMLY OKAY?
YES.
.....

-HUH?
THERE WERE ALREADY SYMPTOMS OF BLOOMING?
ON AVERAGE, THEY BECOME VISIBLE AFTER ABOUT ONE WEEK SO THIS IS CLEARLY PREMATURE.
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN WHILE YOU WERE WITH THOSE TWO?

UWAH... A LOVE TRIANGLE?
SUPER TROUBLE-SOME-

HMM.
NO. NOT REALLY... WAS THERE?
YEAH, NOTHING THAT I CAN THINK OF.
.....
BUT THAT OTHER GUY WAS CRAZY JEALOUS OF THE TWO OF THEM.
YOU SHOULD BE CAREFUL, TOO
ANYWAY, I'VE GOT THE BRANCH INVESTIGATING RIGHT NOW TO SEE IF THERE'S EVER BEEN A PRIOR INSTANCE OF THIS
THAT GUY'S IRRELEVANT. CONCENTRATE ON THE MISSION.
I GOT IT.
Peel
246
I SEE OURS!
TOO SLOW.

HA HA HA
YOU'RE PRETTY ADULT-LIKE FOR A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT.
AH
ME TOO. EVERYONE'S GOING TO DO KARAOKE AND SUCH, BUT I'M NOT VERY GOOD AT IT SO-
I'M JUST GOING TO RELAX AND READ ALONE
THIS PERSON'S NOT AN ADULT AT ALL
HMM. JUST READ BY MYELF, I GUESS.
MANAGER, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO OVER THE HOLIDAY?
WOW EVEN I'D BE ABLE TO SHOW OFF MY GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH HER BETTER THAN HE IS RIGHT NOW!
RESEARCHING THE SHOP YOU WANT TO GO TO IS FINE AND ALL, BUT THE AMOUNT THAT WAS DONE WAS UNBELIEV-ABLE!
AH HA HA!
TERRIS CLEANING THE BACK ROOM
I WENT ON A DATE WITH HER ONCE.
!? ARATA!
WAI- ARATA!
twitch

SHE POURS ALL HER STRENGTH INTO EVERYTHING SHE DOES.
STOP
STOP IT
AND YET, BEFORE LONG SHE REACHES HER LIMIT AND ALWAYS WINDS UP IN A STATE OF CONFUSION.
WOULDN'T YOU SAY THAT EVEN TO THIS DAY SHE DOESN'T KNOW HER OWN CAPACITY?
THE REAL KOUSAKA IS A COMPLETE KID!
Slap
OW
WHAT'D YOU DO THAT FOR?
WAY

YOU'RE IN THE WAY!!
YOU'RE IN THE WAY!!
YOU'RE ALWAYS DOING SUCH UN-NECESSARY THINGS!
KOU... SAKA...?
WHAT'S THE MATTER, KOUSAKA?
THIS ISN'T LIKE YOU...
HEY! KOUSAKA!

...AH...
...I...
JUST NOW
NO WAY...
WHAT IS IT!?
WHAT WAS THAT JUST NOW?
CALM DOWN, KOUSAKA!
KOUSAKA-SAN, ARE YOU OKAY?
SHE'S BACK TO NORMAL...?
JUST NOW, SURELY THAT WAS THE SYNDOUS TAKING POSSESSION OF HER EGO?
Pat

I... I'M... ALRIGHT...
ba-dump
ba-dump
... MAN-AGER...
YOU'RE NOT ALRIGHT! YOU'RE SHORT OF BREATH, AREN'T YOU?
WHY DON'T YOU GO TO THE BACK AND REST AWHILE?
CAN YOU WALK? DO YOU NEED TO USE MY ARM?
ba-thump
ba-thump

AH...
I...
I...
ba-dump
I...
ba-dump
I'M...
ba-dump
ba-dump

GRAB
I...
ARATA...
TAP

KOU...
SHE'S FINE.
BA-THUMP
BECAUSE SHE HAS ME TO PROTECT HER.

EVEN THOUGH THEY'RE GRADUALLY STARTING TO BLOOM, HE'S HINDERING IT.
AH! AGAIN- THAT ARATA GUY...
At any rate, it seems he acted as a distraction when the girl was being taken over.
IT STOPPED!?
He seems as though he likes Kousaka-chan, but-
-this is all for the usual, self-satisfying goal or making oneself feel good, after all, isn't it?
In the end, you don't really love anyone but yourself, do you...?
YOU...
clench

FINALLY, YOU LOST YOUR COMPOSURE.
MANAGER WAS JEALOUS, WASN'T HE?
KOUSAKA-
YOU SAID THERE WAS NO WAY THE MANAGER HAD FEELINGS FOR YOU, BUT-

WHEN I PLAYED UP MY CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH KOUSAKA,
HE STARTED TO GET FLUSTERED
ADA—TA?
IF HE DIDN'T HAVE ANY INTEREST IN YOU, HE WOULDN'T HAVE GOTTEN JEALOUS.
WHETHER YOU'RE AN ADULT OR A CHILD IS IRRELEVANT.

WITH THIS YOU KNOW THAT THE MANAGER LIKES YOU, RIGHT?

Hasn't his jealousy been flaring up at Yuasa nonstop up until now?
Is this all for Kousaka-chan's sake?
WHAT... IS THAT GUY DOING?
ka—chak
jolt
UWAH! YAMADA!
...AH.
COULD IT BE YOU HEARD ALL THAT?
SORRY, BUT WOULD YOU MIND LETTING THEM BE ALONE FOR A LITTLE BIT?

YOU'RE SHOWING OFF YOUR VIRTUOUS ATTITUDE IN ORDER TO WIN OVER KOUSAKA-CHAN, RIGHT?
HUH?
TO WIN HER OVER?
BECAUSE...
YOU LIKE THAT GIRL, DON'T YOU?
YAMADA, WHAT'S WRONG?
AND IF YOU THINK ABOUT IT, THAT'S WHAT PEOPLE WOULD NORMALLY DO, RIGHT?
SAY "THAT'S RIGHT."
WHAT'S "WRONG" IS YOU, ISN'T IT?

Everyone believes themselves to be the most important.
They think only of their own happiness.
IT'S NOT MY INTENTION TO WIN HER OVER
WELL, THEN WHAT'S THE POINT OF DOING SUCH A THING?!
It's the same for Arata, isn't it?
Say "that's right."
Otherwise I will...
rustle
I will...
THERE IS NO SUCH INSTANCE WHERE A PERSON DOES SOMETHING FOR ANOTHER BEYOND IT BEING FOR THEIR OWN GAIN.
IF IT'S FOR THE SAKE OF GETTING THE GIRL YOU LIKE...
THEN ISN'T IT CONVENIENT TO LIE WITHOUT SO MUCH AS BATTING AN EYELASH!?
EVERYONE DOES THAT, DON'T THEY?

IF IT'S FOR KOUSAKA'S HAPPINESS
THEN MY OWN HAPPINESS IS TRIVIAL.
HAVE TO ACKNOWLEDGE IT.

I...

YAMADA? WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

I...

WHAM!

FOR A LONG TIME NOW, I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO SENSE ANY RESOLUTION FROM YOU TOWARDS OUR MISSION.
WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT OUR MISSION!?
I SAID THAT GUY WAS UNRELATED TO OUR MISSION. OION'T I?
WHAT ARE YOU OOING. ASSHOLE?

"IF YOU DON'T WATCH FROM CLOSE BY, YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO EXPERIENCE IT YOURSELF?"
DIDN'T YOU SAY YOU WERE DOING THIS INFILTRATION BECAUSE
I DON'T THINK ANYTHING.
"AH, JUST AS EXPECTED."
"IT WAS FOR PEACE OF MIND."
SO THIS TIME, TOO WAS AN IMITATION."
WHAT IS YOUR GOAL?

I SIMPLY WANT TO EXPERIENCE THAT FOR MYSELF.
WELL
I THINK THOSE TWO ARE GOING TO BLOOM SOON, SO I'M HEADING BACK.
TCH.
--
YOU...

beep
ETO, WHAT DID YOU FIND OUT?
WE EXAMINED ALL THE BRANCH DATA
BUT THERE WASN'T A SINGLE PRECEDENT FOR SYMPTOMS ONLY APPEARING IN A DAY AND A HALF
HAVE THEY BLOOMED?
NO, NOT YET, BUT TERRIS THINKS IT'LL HAPPEN SOON
AT ANY RATE, I'M SENDING ODYSSEY THAT WAY
YOU GUYS BE CAREFUL.
THIS IS JUST MY GUESS, BUT-

IT MAY BE A NEW VARIETY OF CORE.
PLIP

Thud
KOUSAKA-CHAN?
ARE YOU OKAY? ARE YOU HURT?

NO WAY
ARATA
WHAT...
IS THIS...?

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